Reoperation in a Jehovah's Witness 22 Years after Aortic Allograft Reconstruction of the Right Ventricular Outflow Tract

Dohmen P M, Liu J, Lembcke A, Konertz W

We report the case of a 29-year-old male Jehovah's Witness who presented with hemolysis and right heart failure as a consequence of extreme calcification of an aortic valve-containing allograft and Dacron prosthesis that had been placed 22 years earlier to repair tetralogy of Fallot. Reoperation had been denied by several other centers, because of the patient's refusal to undergo blood transfusion. For 2 weeks preoperatively, we raised the patient's hemoglobin level by treating him with recombinant erythropoietin, oral iron, and folic acid. At surgery, under normothermic cardiopulmonary bypass, we replaced the aortic allograft in the right ventricular outflow tract with a cryopreserved pulmonary allograft, also containing a valve. The postoperative course was uneventful, and the patient was released from the hospital on the 13th postoperative day in excellent condition.

Tex Heart Inst J 2003; 30:146